



Manchester-by-the-Sea Meeting Minutes

Board/Committee: Open Space & Recreation Committee
Day & Date: Monday, January 13, 2025
Time: 4:00 PM
Location: Room 7 and Zoom
Signature: Sue Croft
Attendees: Steve Gang, Patti Mitchell, Terry Cowman, Morgan Evans, Nick de Sherbinin, Marc Resnick, Sue Croft

MINUTES

- Welcome/Announcements – Steve Gang called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. There were no announcements.
- Western Woods – Steve Gang noted that there had been some more beaver activity on the Onion River but otherwise no updates.
- Gordon/Chebacco Woods – No updates.
- New Trailhead Signage – Nick de Sherbinin told the committee that he had spoken to Chuck Dam as well as members of the Wayfinding Task Force since Chuck recommended leveraging the work previously done by that team and combining efforts with them. Nick proceeded to show the committee examples of different potential signage and then showed a map of potential locations. Patti Mitchell noted that it might be a good idea to talk to abutters. Steve mentioned some of his experiences with private landowners in the Western Woods some of whom are welcoming of hikers using trails that cross their land and others who are not. Morgan Evans asked about the trailhead at Ox Pasture, if it was privately owned and if it was possible to reroute this trail to be entirely on public land. Steve said that the trail was partially on private land and that the owners were hesitant to have hikers cross their property. Steve endorsed the possibility of rerouting this and other trails within the Western Woods so that they're entirely on MECT or Town land. Morgan agreed to investigate this possibility further. From a signage perspective, it was decided to hold off on this location for the time being given the current challenges. Six priority locations were identified in keeping with Chuck's request of 2-6 sites. Nick will work with the DPW to move forward with these six locations. Morgan noted that in Beverly there is signage that essentially says "Please enjoy this public way" which prompted Steve to suggest that in certain trailhead parking areas the committee consider signage saying "Please enjoy this public

parking” for trail access. Nick moved that the committee accept the six suggested locations to proceed with trailhead signage. Morgan seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

- Newport Park – Marc Resnick said the full survey of Newport Park is complete and he walked the committee through the detailed map depicting the survey area. He pointed out that MHT was responsible for initiating the complete survey to gain insight into the potential expansion of Newport Park. Marc believes that two new parking spaces can be accommodated on fill close to the circle in the driveway, which would save cutting trees and other new impacts on wetland buffer zones closer to the Powder House Hill trailhead in Newport Park. If those two new parking spaces were created, Marc noted the possibility of swapping for two spaces right at the trailhead. Terry mentioned ADA compliance given that that is the entrance to trails that have the greatest potential to be ADA compliant and that the residents of Newport Park are the ones most likely to require ADA compliant trails. He also noted that the Bike and Ped Committee got CPC funding to hire a trail expert to come out in Feb to survey trails and associated grades in the area connecting Newport Park to Pine St (most likely) and make recommendations for ADA compliance of about half a mile of trails. Next steps include:
 - Marc finalizes plans with DPW
 - Marc works with MHA to get their signoff
 - If approved by MHA, Marc finalizes plans with ConCom
 - Upon ConCom approval, proceed with creation of parking spaces (hopefully Spring 2025)
- DeNormandie Project Update – Steve informed the committee that Greenbelt succeeded in acquiring the DeNormandie property and the project continues. Greenbelt also has resources for signage and trail maintenance.
- Other Opportunities for Land Conservation – No new conservation opportunities were suggested at this time. Steve asked everyone be on the lookout for potential prospects.
- The meeting minutes of the 12/2 meeting were unanimously approved.
- Next meeting will be scheduled for Monday 2/10 at 4:00 PM.
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.